

DIVISION: FORMS 1 - 4

AGE GROUP: 12 years plus.

SERIES: CURRENT AFFAIRS

PROGRAMME (7) CARIBBEAN SUMMIT CONFERENCE

RECORDING:TRANSMISSION: Wednesday, 10th March, 1965 (2.46 - 2.58)

NARR: Hello boys and girls,

On Sunday afternoon at about 1.15 there was a large crowd of people at Atkinson Field. They were waiting for a plane to arrive. Among the crowd was the Prime Minister, Mr. Forbes Burnham and most of the other Ministers of the Cabinet. When the plane arrived a red carpet was rolled to the door - and soon ^{our} ~~the~~ Prime Minister ~~of Guyana~~ was welcoming to Guyana a group of very important men. I don't have to tell you what they're here for. Yes. They're here for what is called the Caribbean Summit Conference.

But why is it called a "Summit" conference? To answer that let's make a comparison. You know that a Summit is the top of a mountain. And if you climb to the top of a mountain you can see all around you easily for miles. You have what is called a better perspective - a better view than if you had only gone half way up. Well let's see if this helps us to understand a Summit conference. For one thing a Summit conference is usually held between the Heads of State - the men at the very top - ~~of~~ if the man at the very top can't come then they are represented by someone very close to the top. But what about perspective? Well at

/a Summit conference.....

a Summit conference each country gets a clear view of what others are thinking - what they want to do and this is very important - if they can work together in any way. You noticed what ~~He~~ said - "if they can work together in any way" - Remember that - for that's the most important idea of this Summit conference that is now going on.

You may remember, boys and girls, hearing that up to 1961 there was a Federation of the West Indies - that is countries like Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad, the Windward and Leeward Islands were all united under one big Government which met in Trinidad - but of course they kept their own governments at home as well. But the Federation broke up and since then Jamaica has become independent and Trinidad has also become independent. And the British Government is trying to get Barbados and Grenada and St. Kitts and the other smaller islands to join in a small Federation and be independent. But, boys and girls, although the Federation itself broke up, the idea of getting together for certain things like Trade has not died. They call this idea of agreement on certain things together and acting together - regional cooperation. And many people say that unless there is regional cooperation these countries in the Caribbean are going to find it difficult to get a hearing from the bigger and richer countries. And so it was decided to hold Summit conferences ~~every two years~~ in different Caribbean countries to discuss the problems which all these countries are facing. And this year we are very happy because the Summit conference is being held here in Guyana. As a matter of fact, right now as I am talking to you the

/conference is in.....

conference is in full swing and the discussion goes backward and forward.

What are they talking about? or to put it how the delegat~~es~~ would say it - what's on the Agenda/ Well here is the problem of sugar. As you know the West Indies (the English speaking territories) sell their sugar to Britain, who buys it at a price that makes it profitable to grow sugar in these parts. But if Britain decides to drop her price then all these countries will suffer - now if at the Summit conference they decide to stand together and stand firm then Britain will be cautious about what she does with the price of West Indian sugar.

But what else? You know, don't you, that we now have a University in Guyana. Before we had this University we shared in the University of the West Indies - part of which is in Jamaica and part in Trinidad. Now some people feel that it would be a good thing for the University of Guiana and the University of the West Indies to become one University. Other people feel that they need not become one University but that they can cooperate - that is work together on some matters. For instance that Guyanese doctors could be trained there or that people who want to do very high studies - not just the normal University studies - could go to the University of the West Indies from here. Now this needs a lot of discussion. You see, it's a matter of finding an idea or a plan that would suit everybody - and this takes a lot of hard bargaining.

And what about aid from other countries for this

/whole area? Some.....

whole area? Some richer countries want to give aid to the West Indies but they seem to prefer to give it to not the various countries of the West Indies by themselves - but to the West Indies as a whole. Well if the Government of the West Indies agree to work together then they can approach a country like Canada together and work out with the Canadians how much they all need and what sort of aid they each need, ~~and-what-sort-of-aid-they-ee~~ Then Canada can plan for the whole thing in a big way.

Perhaps one of the most interesting things about the conference is this: they've been discussing the idea of lending some qualified and skilled West Indians to other parts of the Commonwealth like some African countries. Or even of exchanging skilled people - For instance, if a highly qualified Guyanese or Barbadian Engineer goes to work for a few years - say in Nigeria then a highly qualified Nigerian may come to work here. And if this continues, and the numbers grows, then it will mean that underdeveloped countries will be helping each other. The passages to and from these countries might be paid by the richer countries so that help goes all the way round.

But, boys and girls, what is most interesting about this conference is that all the delegates seem to feel that the countries of the Caribbean must come closer to each other. Of course they know that before they can get really close together they must solve a lot of problems. Our own Prime Minister also hopes that not only the parts of the Caribbean that were or are -British should come closer together - but we should try to get closer to the Dutch, the French and the Latin Caribbean countries.

/All this will....

All this will take a long time - But if the Summit
Conferences become a regular thing - and the delegates
get to know each more - then when you are a little older
you may belong to a big Caribbean Unit. So you should
take a keen interest in the Summit.

So long then, until next week.

OPR:

PLAY THEME: